

Waste Reduction Goal Task Force
BRIEFING PAPER
For
Overview of Other Region IV States' Waste Reduction Goal

National:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Resource Conservation Challenge (RCC) has developed the 35 Percent Recycling of Municipal Solid Waste Action Plan. This is a national action plan that lays out a framework or road map for increasing the rate of municipal solid waste recycling and helping the country meet a national goal of 35 percent. It identifies targeted waste streams, proposes 2008 goals for each of the targeted streams (see below). EPA expects the plan will create a national culture that emphasizes recycling and will help build the infrastructure that successful recycling programs demand.

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) states that each year through 2008, maintain the national average MSW generation rate at not more than 4.5 pounds per person per day. And, by 2008, increase recycling of the total annual MSW produced to 35 percent from 31 percent in 2002.

These goals would be met through the following increases in recycling in key waste categories:

Paper and paperboard: An increase in the recovery of paper and paperboard products from 36.7 million tons in 2001 to 44.1 million tons in 2008 (an increase in recycling of total paper/paperboard materials from 44.9 to 53.8 percent).

Food waste: An increase in the recovery/diversion of food waste from .7 million tons in 2001 to 1.28 million tons in 2008 (an increase in recycling from 2.8 to 5.0 percent).

Yard trimmings: An increase in the recovery/diversion of yard waste from 15.8 million tons in 2001 to 16.8 million tons in 2008 (an increase from 56.5 to 60.0 percent).

Paper folding cartons: An increase in the recovery/diversion of paper folding cartons from .48 million tons in 2001 to .8 million tons in 2008 (an increase from 8.7 to 14 percent). These figures are included in the paper and paperboard figures above.

Wood packaging: An increase in the recovery/diversion of wood packaging from 1.25 million tons in 2001 to 2.0 million tons in 2008 (an increase from 15 to 24 percent).

Plastic wraps: An increase in the recovery/diversion of plastic wraps from .17 million tons in 2001 to .5 million tons in 2008 (an increase from 6.6 to 19 percent).

Beverage containers (Aluminum, plastic & glass): An increase in the recovery/diversion of beverage containers from 2.93 million tons in 2001 to 4.36 million tons in 2008 (an increase from 26 to 39 percent).

Alabama:

Alabama law requires that cities and counties develop and adopt comprehensive solid waste management plans. These plans must address how local governments will meet the statewide 25% waste reduction and recycling goal. Alabama law also requires all state agencies, K-12 public schools, and state universities and post secondary schools to implement their own recycling programs. However, no process is in place for the measurement or enforcement of this law. As such, diversion rates for the state, local governments and institutions cannot be determined.

Florida:

In 2002, Florida adopted a 30% waste reduction goal. Compliance with this goal is calculated on a real-time basis, there are no base-year numbers. In addition to each county meeting this goal, each county is required to recycle a “significant portion” of at least 4 or the following 8 items: newspaper, office paper, cardboard, steel, aluminum, glass, plastic, and yard waste. “Significant portion” replaced a 50% requirement in previous incarnations of the law. Diversion to Class III/IV landfills is not allowed to be counted toward the waste reduction goal.

Georgia:

In 2005, Georgia did away with its percent waste reduction goal and went with a statewide goal to limit waste disposed to 5.0 pounds per person per day by 2012. Specifically spelled out in this goal were individual goals for the following four commodities: glass (0.140 lbs/person/day), paper (0.850 lbs/person/day), metal (0.186 lbs/person/day) and plastic (0.530 lbs/person/day). A waste characterization study was conducted in 2005 to determine what materials were available to be recycled from the waste stream. Future studies will be conducted in 2012 and 2017. Each county is not required to meet this goal; however, each local government is required to offer some recycling options to its citizens. Currently the state average is 6.5 pounds per person per day.

Kentucky:

In 2002, Kentucky did away with its 25% waste reduction goal. Currently in effect is a statewide goal to achieve 35% recycling, determined on a real-time basis, by 2010. Only major items recycled by the public (metals, paper products, plastics & glass) are considered. In 2006, Kentucky had a statewide recycling rate of 27%. Individual counties are not required to meet this goal.

Mississippi:

Mississippi has a 25% waste reduction goal. By law, each county is required to have an “adequate strategy” established to meet this goal in their solid waste plans. These plans are required to be reviewed annually. However, no method is established for the measurement or enforcement of the goal.

North Carolina:

In 1991 (base year), North Carolina set a statewide goal to reduce what was going into its Class I landfills by 40% of the base year. Individual counties are not required to meet this goal. This goal was to be achieved by 2001 and disposal in Class III/IV landfills did not count. The goal was not met in 2001. Until a new goal is set, the statewide 40% per capita goal continues to be the benchmark.

South Carolina:

In October 2000, South Carolina amended its Solid Waste Act to reflect new state recycling and disposal goals. The recycling goal was changed to 35% of the MSW stream. The disposal goal was changed to 3.5 pounds of MSW per person per day. Both of these goals were to be met by FY05. The state did not reach either goal. SC Dept. of Health and Environmental Control have asked the Legislature to extend the deadline for meeting those goals until FY12.

Issues:**To Be Determined By Task Force****Focus Questions:**

1. Should Tennessee follow similar examples of other Region IV states for more compatibility within the southeast United States?
2. Should Tennessee borrow goals or waste reduction measures from EPA or other southeast states?